

1609/511.

A

LETTER

FROM

DARBY TRACY,

CHAIRMAN, IN LONDON,

TO

MR. DENIS FEAGAN,

BREECHES-MAKER, AT EDENDERRY.

WHEREIN IS CLEARLY PROVED THE
EFFECTS WHICH

AN UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN,

WILL HAVE ON THE INTEREST AND HAPPINESS OF

THE COMMON PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

—o*o—
THE THIRD EDITION.
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DUBLIN.

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1799.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following original Letter was found a few days since on the road between Edenderry and Philipstown, and was given to the Editor as a curious specimen of native Irish sagacity. The Editor thinks it an object worthy the public attention, which (he conceives) has not yet been sufficiently directed to this important enquiry, viz. "In what manner the Union with Great Britain is likely to affect the interests and happiness of the common people of Ireland?" The Editor makes no apology for publishing the Letter in the uncouth dress in which it was found, as he thinks any attempt at improving the stile would have diminished the effect of the genuine simplicity of manner in which Mr. Tracy has delivered his sentiments. The only liberty which the Editor has taken with the original Letter is, that of correcting the orthography, which he must acknowledge was, in some places, rather defective.



A

L E T T E R,

&c. &c.

DEAR DENIS,

YOUR'S I received by the hands of Tim Foley of Cappagh. You tell me you suppose, from my long stay in London, that I am grown a foreigner to Ireland, and perhaps a fine English gentleman. No such thing, Denis dear. I love poor old Ireland as warmly in my heart as ever; and would turn out to fight for her in a minute, if there was occasion. and as to my growing a fine gentleman, you may trust Darby Tracy for that, sorrow one of our family was ever given that way. I keep my own carriage

riage to be sure; but then, I carry it myself with the help of my partner, Nephew Dick, who is grown a brave strapping fellow, and works the poles sweetly. Our stand is in St. James's-street, at the door of the St. James's coffee-house, hard by the Cyder cellar, where, so far from forgetting old Ireland, my chief delight in the long spare mornings is to be reading the Irish newspapers to the boys on the flags, and there we see what you are all doing, just as if we were in the thick of you. I find you are kicking up a fine row in Dublin about this Union that's going to be between England and Ireland. Now, to tell you the truth, I didn't much like the notion myself at first, more especially when I saw that all the counsellors were so mad angry at it—aye—and proud enough I was of the flourishing speech of the great counsellor Tom Goold concluding so gloriously with a fine rousing oath—a sure argument with us boys on the flags. Ah, but Dennis, thinks I, those lawyers are most of them parliament-men, or expecting to be made such, and may be that's the reason why they're now so busy crying up the parliament, which you and I can very well remember they used to cry down without mercy. Well, but that's not all, for seeing in those

Irish



Irish newspapers such a number of pamphlets advertised on this same Union, I grew very curious to get the reading of some of them, and so I got my friend the waiter—Do you remember Nick Cassidy, our old schoolfellow, in Edenderry?—Sure he's waiter at the coffee-house here; and so I got him to lend me one or two of those pamphlets that are kept for the use of the quality in the coffee-room—but, after poring over them till I was half blind, and puzzling myself long enough, striving to make out their meaning, I could find little or nothing in them that *touch'd the like of us, Denis*. They were all about the * Independance of Parliament, and the Competency of Parliament, and Imperial Rights, and the minister's influence, and the final Judicature, and a great deal more high sounding talk, that I could'nt understand, and I'm sure didn't *in any way touch us*. Upon this I began to think that there was no use to be reading pamphlets or speeches made by one side of the quality, to shew the other side how this Union concerned them; but never considering or caring to the value of a potatoe skin *how it might touch the like of us*. Why Denis dear, what

* Mr. Tracy's orthography is so extremely fantastical in this place, that the Editor has been obliged to guess at the words intended to be used by him.

what concern is it to you or me whether the Irish lawyers are making speeches in the parliament house—or minding their business in the four courts—or whether my lord marquis or my lord duke could make most of his borough by selling the seats (as they call them) for ready money at home, or jobbing them here at St. James's?—No, no—we have nothing to do with such matters; the thing for the like of us to look after is, what this same Irish parliament (that's grown such a pet with the quality of a sudden) has done for the poor of Ireland?—That's what I want them to tell me. I am sure it has not relieved them from that old burthen the tithes, which is a heavier load upon the shoulders of a poor cottier, than my lord Allen sitting in general Dalrymple's lap would be upon my nephew Dick and myself if we were obliged to carry them from College Green to the Hill of Howth! And what's more, I'm told there's one Patrick Duigenan, who, by his name, should be one of *our own own selves*, and he is the most furious of them all against any one meddling with tithes—I suppose he is a tithe proctor himself, or some such thing, and we all know what grinders and foul-mouthed dogs those proctors are. But surely, Denis, this Pat. Duigenan

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can never be the same black muzzled little fellow that used to be waiting on the priest, and carrying the incense at Arran Quay chapel, when you and I (God be with the day) were on our frolics in sweet Dublin? And a cute scholar that little black muzzled fellow was, and had all the mass by heart, and many a time I've heard him run it over faster nor any horse could trot. And so you see what learning may bring a man to. But I was talking about the tithes, and going to tell you the good news I heard from one of the great people standing at the door of the coffee-house; how the tithes would be all paid out of the king's treasury, once this same Union was settled, and how they would provide comfortably for our clergy well as their own. How do you like that Denis? Troth if you knew all—*neither you, nor the like of you* would be against this Union—do you know who it is that's against it—I can tell you—for we know more of Irish politics here on the flags in St. James's-street, than you do on the steps of the parliament house in College Green. Besides the counsellors, as I told you before, there's the * copperashion of Dublin, with those gay lads the aldermen

* It is evident, from the context, that corporation was the word here intended—the original spelling has been preserved in this instance to serve as a specimen of Mr. Tracy's orthography, in decyphering and correcting which the Editor has bestowed uncommon pains and labour.

aldermen at their head—aye and the owners of boroughs who have seats in parliament; may be you couldn't guess the reason why?—and the sweet Orange boys, (smoak that Denis). But most and greatest of all against the Union is, Mister Speaker—his honour, I am told, has done many a good job for Ireland; and I heard one of your linen factors t'her night, in the cyder cellar swear, that “Jack Foster was worth the whole *kit* of Irish patriots put together.” But his honour, it seems, is a great financier—do you know what that is, Denis? why it's a man who understands how to borrow plenty of money, and to lay on plenty of taxes to pay it; and to be sure, his honour must be mainly ignorant indeed, if he did not (by this time) know better than what we can tell him, how much he'd lose by the removal of the parliament, as I'm afraid they'd never make him speaker of the English house after his opposing the Union. I'm told his place is as good as six thousand a-year to him—why then “by the Lord Harry,” as counsellor Tom Goold said, as well as I love Ireland, and as much as I like the Union, if I was a parliament man I'd surely vote, aye and speak too, against it, sooner than I'd give up six thousand a year—aye, and so would you too, Denis, especially if you were a great financier.

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After all, my dear Denis, is it not very provoking to see a parcel of fat city aldermen, who are bursting with the good things they have got at the castle, have the impudence to set themselves up (because they are backed by some of the great parliament-men) to fly in the face of the government, aye and of the people both of England and Ireland in this business!—I'd be glad to know whether they've the modest assurance to expect to be joined by the catholics too?—may-be these borough-jobbers forget how respectfully the catholic petition was treated by them some time ago—didn't they scout and kick it out of doors—and wern't they going to send the son of the great Edmund Burke to Newgate for merely offering to lay it quietly on the table of the Parliament-house?—By my soul, Denis, I am very sorry for these things, and I forgive them with all-my heart, but that doesn't say that I can quite forget them when I see these same high-flyers setting themselves against the good of poor Ireland, and against our king—God bless his jolly face—who is all goodness and kindness every inch of him—Wasn't it his majesty, (God bless him again and again, I say,) that recommended our rights to this same parliament—and we all know how much notice they took of his recommendation—

recommenda- tion.—For my part, Denis, I hate quarrelling and fighting, and I hate scolding worse than either, and I'm sure there will be no end of it while matters go on as they have done for so long a time, setting up Protestant against Catholic to cut one and others throats, and to call bad names, which, (as I said before,) is a great deal worse—Isn't it better for us Catholics to trust to the fairness of an United Parliament for doing us justice, than to lay ourselves again sprawling at the feet of men and who care only for themselves, and are quaking at the thoughts of what wealth and what power we poor Irish Catholics may grow to *an hundred years hence!*—*An hundred years hence!* God bless us, Denis, what a mighty long fight these wise men have!—

You'll not be surprised to hear that the ringleaders of the United Irishmen, and some of the great orators of that party in parliament, are tooth and nail against the Union; it must be comical enough to see them and the Orange-men hugging and paying frothy compliments to one and other in parliament. The United-men indeed have good reason for their opposition, as they have a little plan of their own, I'm told, of a Union with France.—It well becomes these parliamentary orators, does'n't? after leading
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the poor foolish Irish boys into rebellion by their fine speeches, to leave them in the lurch to be whipped and hanged by the Orange-men, and shot by the king's soldiers, while they were skulking in England to save their own necks.—Thank God we have no such doings here in England, we have neither Orange-men, nor rebels of any sort.—The poor here are contented, because they are well taken care of by the parliament—and *that's what you'll be in Ireland, my boy, and all the poor labourers there too, once the Union is settled.*—And as to the taxes, they want to persuade you will be laid on thick and thin by the Union, I'll tell you how that matter is here—why I have been a matter of twelve years living here in England, and I never paid a single tax the whole time, except for the number of my sedan, and that's no more than what I believe the boys of the long pole in Dublin always paid—*But why don't I pay taxes?—Why?—because the Parliament here lays them on the rich.* Perfumery, coaches, footmen, gold and silver lace, race-horses, &c. &c. &c. pay the taxes here; now I neither use powder nor pomatum—I have neither footmen nor coaches—nor do I keep race-horses—and therefore the taxes don't touch me.—It will surprise you, Denis, to hear that
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the Parliament of England raised upwards of forty times as much this year for carrying on the war, as Ireland ever paid of taxes in any one year—and yet—no poor man will be called upon for a penny of this money—it is all laid upon the *INCOME* of the *RICH*—and the more they screw their tenants, the more they are obliged to pay—It must be acknowledged that the Irish gentry won't much like this kind of taxation—they will, however, have a great draw-back in the number of their children—it is comical enough, Denis, but upon my soul it is true, that the more children a man has in this country the less taxes he has to pay—if this rule should be followed up in Ireland, some people whom you and I know would have money to receive from the tax-gatherer, instead of giving him any—and perhaps this is the reason why your Parliament has never thought proper to lighten the burden of a poor man with a large family; I suppose they thought that neither Paddy nor Sheelagh wanted encouragement in this way.—But tell me, if you can, in what have your Parliament-men mended your condition?—O, my dear Denis, it would do your heart good to see the comfort and decency of the labouring people in this country; they have good clothes and warm houses to cover them—
and

and when they are sick they have physic to cure them, and a doctor to attend them, and food to support themselves and their families, and all this is paid by a cess laid on the landlords, the clergy, and the gentry of the parish, AND THE POOR MAN CONTRIBUTES NOTHING TOWARDS IT—*when I see this, and think how many of my unfortunate countrymen are pining in sickness without assistance, and their families obliged to beg or rob from mere want, having no support but accidental charity, I look upon the Union as a blessing sent from God Almighty his own self to relieve poor old Ireland from the sufferings under which she has been groaning so long!*—God be with you, my dear Denis, and may he direct you all for the best—and prevent you any longer being made the tools of crafty and designing politicians, who care not a penny for you after their turn is served—With best love to my cousin Molly—not forgetting Judy—I remain,

Dear Denis,

Your friend and kinsman,

DARBY TRACY.

FINIS.

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